

California's plan to build a high-speed rail line from San Diego to San Francisco isn't getting a lot of love from House Republicans. It's a matter of money and geography.

The Republican head of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee John Mica says the first segment in the Central Valley has neither the population nor intercity connections to justify its expense. "And yet we're throwing billions of dollars at that marginal project."

The congressman prefers that the nation's first true high-speed train run between Washington and Boston and he wants to auction off Amtrak's right of way to pay for it.

Republican Congressman John Campbell of Irvine also doesn't want federal dollars going to high speed rail. He gave the California project his "Budget Boondoggle Award." He says California's "going to get a completely useless train from nowhere to nowhere maybe which no one will go on and even those who do will have to be subsidized and you'll never get enough money to make it the full across the state rail that some people envision."

California voters have approved \$10 billion in bonds to develop high speed rail; the federal government has kicked in another \$4 billion in what is being proposed as a \$40 billion project.